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Senate Unit To Examine Press Rights

Associated Press

The Senate Constitutional Rights Subcommittee announced plans yesterday for hearings on the relationship between the government and the press.

The hearings will begin Sept. 28 and continue for several weeks, according to Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr. (D-N.C.).

"The subcommittee's study and hearings are prompted in part by recent developments which have caused many Americans to question the vitality and significance of the Constitution's free-press guarantee," he said in a statement.

"The increased subpoenaing of journalists by grand juries and congressional committees, efforts to secure injunctions against certain newspaper publications, the use of assumed press credentials for investigative 'covers,' and new fears about government control and regulation of the broadcast media have brought into sharp relief existing concern about the relationship between government and the press," Ervin said.

He said the subcommittee intends "to define more clearly the problems which the 'free press' in America faces today." The subcommittee will question newsmen and government officials.